

The drug problem in Box Elder County includes the abuse and sale of many drugs including marijuana, Lortab, Soma, Oxycontin, Ecstasy, LSD and mushrooms. But by far the biggest problem involves the production, sale and abuse of methamphetamine.

Why is meth the drug of choice?

- Relatively inexpensive
- Causes a longer and stronger high than other drugs
- Very versatile: It can be smoked, snorted, injected or consumed orally
- Easy to obtain
- Easy to conceal
- Easy and cheap to make



Meth is manufactured in a “lab” using some of the common household items listed in the table below. Labs can be either stationary or mobile, often transported in coolers. This process is very dangerous and generates five to seven (5-7) pounds of hazardous waste for every one (1) pound of finished product produced. Besides the chemicals, typical items found at meth lab sites include hoses, coffee filters, glass beakers, funnels, hot plates, blenders, coffee pots, propane cylinders and plastic containers (Igloo coolers).

Typical Chemicals Found at Lab Sites	Common Legitimate Uses	Poison	Flammable	Toxic Vapors	Explosive	Corrosive	Skin Absorption	Common Health Hazards
Acetone	Fingernail polish remover, solvents	X	X	X			X	Reproductive disorders
Methanol	Brake cleaner fluid, fuel	X	X	X			X	Blindness, eye damage
Ammonia	Disinfectants	X		X		X	X	Blistering, lung damage
Benzene	Dye, varnishes, lacquers	X	X		X	X	X	Carcinogen, Leukemia
Ether	Starter fluid, anesthetic	X	X		X			Respiratory
Freon	Refrigerant, propellants	X		X		X		Frostbite, lung damage
Hydriodic Acid	Driveway cleaner	X		X		X	X	Burns, thyroid damage
Hydrochloric Acid (Hcl gas)	Iron ore processing, mining	X		X		X	X	Respiratory, liver damage
Iodine Crystals	Antiseptic, catalyst	X	X		X	X		Birth defects, kidney failure
Lithium Metal	Lithium batteries	X				X	X	Burns, pulmonary edema
Muriatic Acid	Swimming pool cleaners	X		X		X		Burns, toxic vapors
Phosphine Gas	Pesticides	X		X			X	Respiratory failure
Pseudophedrine	Cold medicines	X						Abuse: health damage
Red Phosphorus	Matches, fireworks	X	X	X	X			Unstable, flammable
Sodium Hydroxide	Drain cleaners, lye	X		X		X	X	Burns, skin ulcers
Sulfuric Acid	Battery acid	X		X		X	X	Burns, thyroid damage
Toluene	Paint thinners, solvents	X	X	X	X		X	Fetal damage, pneumonia
Liquid Lab Waste	None	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown long term effects



Common household items found at meth lab sites



Typical meth lab



Portable meth lab (trunk of car)



Portable meth lab (cooler)

Meth addicts sometimes believe that “bugs” are crawling under their skin which leads them to scratch uncontrollably at the area, causing open sores. Some other signs of a tweaker include the following:

- Paranoia
- Weight loss or skinny
- Missing teeth
- Talks a lot
- Hyperactivity
- Jaundice look
- Dry or white lips
- Does not take care of self or property



Things to look for in your neighborhood which could be indicative of drug use/sales, production and/or distribution:

- Traffic at all hours of the day or night, especially with short stays
- Rundown houses/vehicles
- Chemical containers or odors
- Covered windows

What to do if you suspect drugs are being dealt in your neighborhood:

- Write down license plate numbers and duration of stay
- Document dates and times
- Contact the Box Elder Narcotics Strike Force at (435) 734-3813



## **10 Years of Meth Use**



### **THE FACES OF METH USE**

The above photos show the progression of how meth use ravaged the face of a once attractive woman. The damage occurred over the course of a ten-year period.